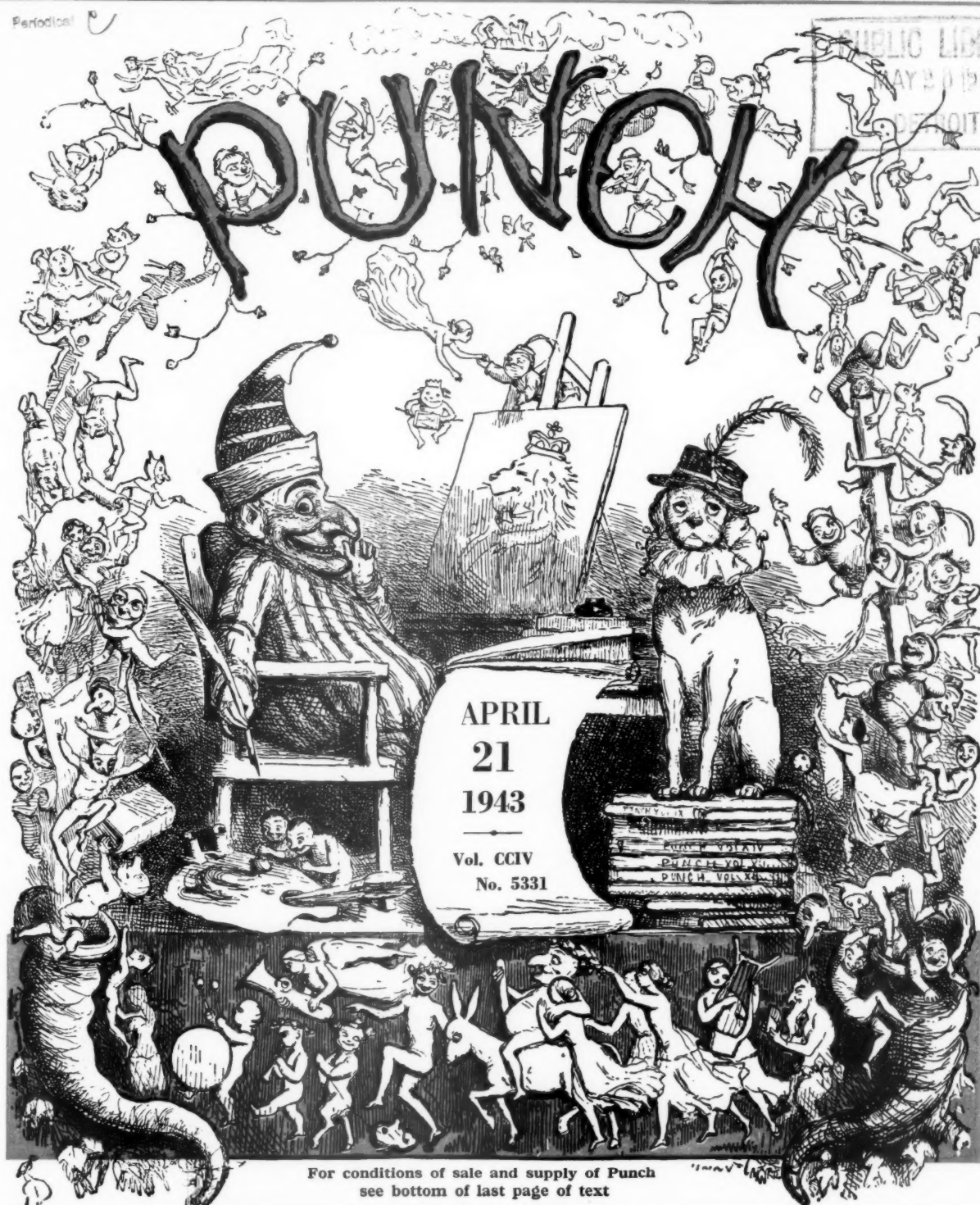


WINNERS
ON
"POINTS"

HUNTLEY & PALMERS BISCUITS

SUCCESS
THROUGH
QUALITY

Periodical



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text




Player's Please





ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE NAME

MORLEY 

KNITWEAR · SOCKS · UNDERWEAR · SHIRTS · TIES · GLOVES

*Supreme as ever
—worth waiting for*

The valuable vitamins and perfect flavour are always preserved in Batchelor's Fruits and Vegetables, whether canned in peace-time or war-time.

Whenever you choose Batchelor's Fruits and Vegetables, points or no points, you are assured of a wholesome, vital addition to your meal. They save fuel, too.

Batchelor's products are scarce to-day, but one day they will return, supreme as ever.

Batchelor's Baked Beans in Tomato Sauce are delightful.

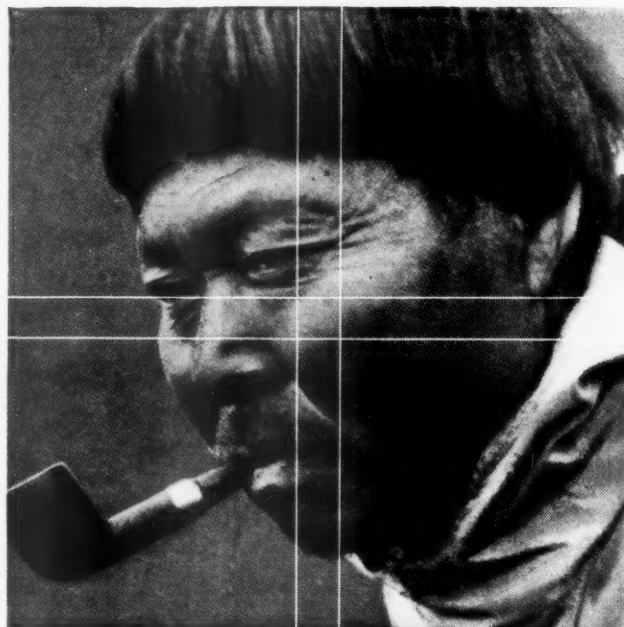


Batchelor's

CANNED ENGLISH

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

The Government asks YOU to grow more food



M a m a p o k !

Did you know that the ESKIMO, economical fellow, eats the dottle left in the bottom of his pipe? Well, he does. And naturally he prefers Four Square dottle, considering it "MAMAPOK" (Delicious) as D. M. Carmichael told us on his return from Greenland in 1938. Proving once again, if proof be needed, that Four Square is a pure tobacco free from all scents and artificial flavours.

But, after all, we make Four Square to be smoked, not eaten. And there will be no dottle left in your pipe if you put a small piece of crumpled paper (cigarette paper for choice) at the bottom of the bowl before filling.

FOUR SQUARE

SIX DIFFERENT BLENDS—ALL MEDIUM STRENGTH

WARNING: Don't buy supplies over the counter to send Overseas. They aren't suitably packed for export, and owing to duty, the cost is four times as much as *Duty Free* parcels, regarding which your tobacconist can give you full particulars. In case of difficulty write to us.

GEORGE DOBIE & SON, LTD., PAISLEY, SCOTLAND.

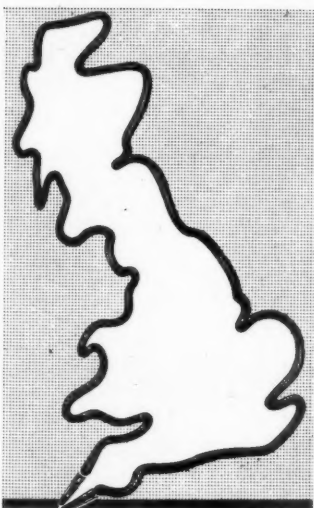
You wouldn't
run over me,
would you? For
your sake and
mine . . . Always fit . . .



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For neat appearance and the worthwhile qualities of strength and durability PATON'S BRITISH LACES are the best in the land.



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FOR LASTING WEAR

FROM YOUR RETAILER—3d. to 6d. PER PAIR
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Special Pins can
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to suit YOUR trade

Long pins, short pins, bent pins, teeny-weeny pins, pins, compass pins, optical pins—pins, pins, pins—and we can put your name on the shank of the smallest. The pin illustrated has a special collar. Can you use it? Size presents no difficulty. We have made pins for over 40 years—perhaps you have a problem pin—reckon we could make it!

Don't forget, for any pin we are the people. We make millions—pins, of course!

Think **INSTEAD**
before you
buy

Telephone: Sheffield 22283 (4 lines)

J. STEAD & CO. LTD. SHEFFIELD 2

5" of water...
(that's patriotism)

A cartoon illustration of a man with a mustache, wearing a bathrobe, sitting in a bathtub. He is holding a string that is attached to a faucet on the left side of the tub. The water level in the tub is indicated by a line.

a tablet of WRIGHT'S
(that's practical)

Not so deep these days . . . not so hot either. Never mind—Wright's still "rules the waves." Even if it comes to bathing in a teacup that fine fragrant lather would put a man in form for the day. It's as stimulating as a sea breeze. And how germs do hate it!

WRIGHT'S Coal Tar Soap

7½^d per tablet (Tax included) One tablet — one coupon

pocket
comfort

A black and white photograph of a woman standing, wearing a light-colored blouse and a dark skirt. She is looking down at a small object in her hand.

Victorian prejudice no longer stops a fashionable woman having a sensibly placed pocket in which she can conveniently thrust a hand. . . . A pocket in which she can carry a handkerchief and a little loose change without resource to the inevitable handbag. . . . A pocket which is also a non-gaping placket, with no buttons or other fasteners to spoil the symmetry of the hip line. Such a pocket as you'll find featured in all the latest style GOR-RAY Skirts, stocked by Drapers and Stores everywhere.

GOR-RAY
Skirts

All the better with the
'Zuror' Pocket Placket Fastening . . .
Issued by: C. STILLITZ, Royal Leamington Spa

**PERPETUAL FLOWERING
"ALLWOODII"**

(Half Pink—
Half Carnation)

Will flower for years,
perfectly hardy. War
conditions and large-
scale food production
enable us to offer you
superb Mixed Seedlings of
ALLWOODII from our
NOVELTY TRIALS.

ONLY 7/6 doz., 3 doz. for 21/-

(Carr. Paid)

Plant from now onwards

BORDER CARNATIONS

The wonderful "SPITFIRE" Collection as
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6 Distinct Varieties 10/- Only

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CULINARY PEA

Allwood's "PROLIFIC."

The most abundant of all.

Height about 18 inches.

Half Pint 1/3, per Pint 2/3

ONIONS. We still have some of our
selected Onion Plants
raised from our own seed. 100-3/6, 200-6/6

"VITA" BEAN

(WHITE HARICOT)—Grow

crops for winter use. Rich in

Protein, Carbo-hydrates & Oil.

Half Pint 1/3, per Pint 2/3

Vegetable List 1d. Post Free

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Meltis

CONFECTIONERY
retains its
"QUALITY"
+
**Not how much
but how good**

Meltis Ltd., London and Bedford.

Barling
PIPE CRAFT

Manufactured
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Take care
of your Barling
Pipe. Supplies are
extremely limited, conse-
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When available, prices are as follows:—
Standard 8.8. 8.8. 1. 20/-
or Sandblast 10/6 13/6 16/6
Ye Olde Wood 8.8. 8.8. 1. 22/-
clearly Selected Grains 15/6 18/6 21/6
marked Letters S.S., S.M., L., E.L., on each pipe
indicate sizes—Small-Small, Small-
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B. BARLING & SONS, EST. IN LONDON 1812.
"Makers of the World's Finest Pipes"

By appointment to
H.M. King George VI
Previous appointment
to the late King George V

HARRIS

*famous for Bacon
since 1770*

C. & T. HARRIS (CALNE) LTD. CALNE, WILTS.

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CRITTALL Canteen Equipment
provides everything for the quick
and efficient running of a works
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and heating and reliability in Air-con-
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Brushes beauty and fragrance into your hair!

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- HANDLEBACK NEVER SPOILT BY WATER
- ABSOLUTE CLEANLINESS AT BRISTLE ROOTS

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BREAD.**

Remember —
quality is
better than
quantity

HōVIS

makes the difference

BEST BAKERS BAKE IT Macclesfield

*Angostura
Bitters is
very scarce
Please be
sparing
with it*

**ANGOSTURA
BITTERS**

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PRODUCT

(258)

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remedy
FOR HEADACHE



On active service
on all fronts!

AERTEX

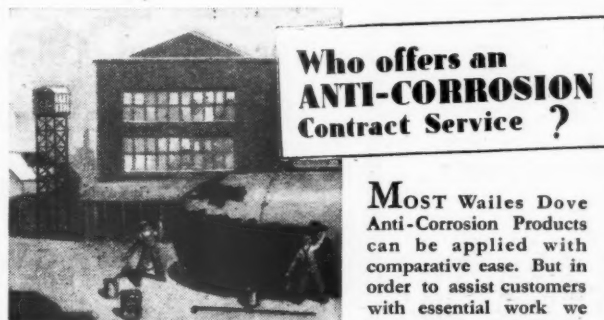


THISTLEWAITE'S GREMLIN

In view of the great interest shown in the subject of Gremlins and the spate of inaccurate description that has been circulated amongst a considerable section of the community, we feel that the publication of this drawing (taken from life!) will do much to help those readers whose conception of these little creatures is based on information that is at variance with the actual truth.

A Gremlin has the power to make itself infinitely small at will, but the maximum size can be seen by comparison with the drawing pin to which this one is tethered.

It was, we learn from Pte. Thistlewaite, much smaller when he first discovered it vainly endeavouring to penetrate the element of the oil filter fitted to his lorry. The fine quality of the instrument, however (made, we understand, by British Filters Ltd. of Market Harborough) prevented the little creature from making its way to the oilways, which, had it succeeded in so doing, would have wrecked the engine. Already in a waterless desert and surrounded by enemy troops, Pte. Thistlewaite would then have been in a most unenviable position.



Department employing a competent staff of skilled asphaltes, enamel layers, painters and others especially trained in the application of our products.

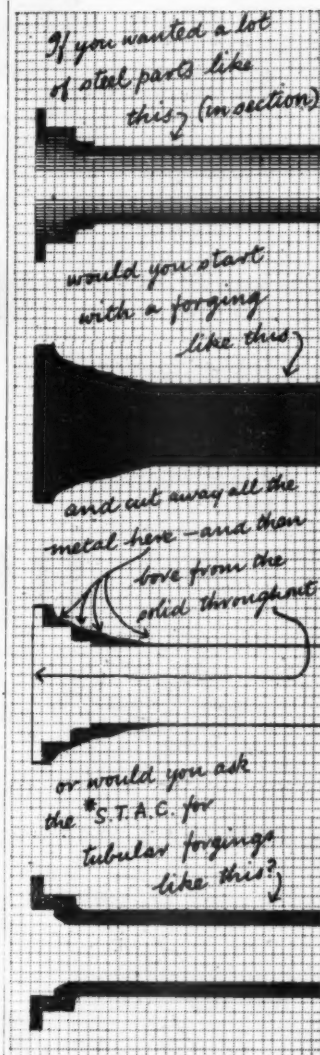
If you are faced with any difficulty in securing suitable equipment and the services of expert labour, we will not only supply the appropriate materials to solve your problems of Corrosion, Rot and Decay, but if required will undertake their actual application and/or Maintenance Work in any part of the country. Enquiries (for essential work only) are invited. Please mention Dept. E.4.

* "BITUMASTIC" is not an adjective, but a registered TRADE MARK, the exclusive property of WAILES DOVE BITUMASTIC LTD.

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The People who Defeat Corrosion

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GD95/B



A steel tube can be just a round piece of metal with a hole in it. Or it can be so forged, manipulated, upset and 'worked up' that it changes into a motor axle, an oxygen cylinder, a lighting standard, a hypodermic needle or a thousand and one other things to help industry save time, money and trouble.

Issued by Tube Investments Ltd.



* STEEL TUBES ADVISORY CENTRE
ASTON, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND



FUEL ECONOMY IN A CAN

JUST when you're tempted to over-run your fuel consumption—remember that Heinz can give you warmth of the truest, healthiest kind—the kind that springs from within.

For good nourishing foods like Heinz oven-baked Beans and Heinz perfect Soups are regular stores of bodily fuel defeating the stealthy chill and giving you new energy.

So keep some of this canned fuel by you ready to serve the war-workers and the fire-watchers of the family. Heinz, as you have known this many a year, have all the old recipes for preserving richness and flavour, bringing the delicious goodness of sun-harvested crops to your winter table.



H. J. HEINZ COMPANY LIMITED LONDON



Not too little..



not too much..



but just right



thanks to the
DOUBLE-DENSE LATHER OF
ERASMIC
SHAVING STICK



The Name

VENUS

*Still stands for
Quality in Pencils*

In wars of olden days, Venus—goddess of love—became known as Victrix or Victory. Thus did the ancient Romans transform their symbol of perfection—just as we do today. Despite wartime control of supply and manufacture, the new 'Utility' and 'War Drawing' pencils produced by Venus conform to the highest possible standard of quality.

The Venus Pencil Co. Ltd., Lower Clapton Road, London, E.5

Throughout *the* Empire
the shoes of more
& more officers are
being polished with

NUGGET
BOOT POLISH
For Extra
Smartness



IN BLACK, MILITARY TAN
& DARK BROWN.



(INDIA)
Sikh Officer
in the
R.A.F.

USE SPARINGLY—THE SUPPLY IS RESTRICTED

N/JN



PUNCH

or
The London Charivari



Vol. CCIV No. 5331

April 21 1943

Charivaria

"EASTER will be neither one thing nor the other this year," declares a business magnate. This will come as a relief to those who feared that it would be both.

It is rumoured that a Nazi general has died a natural death. That looks like a good plot for a mystery novel.

"In spite of the very cold winds," writes a horticulturist, "daffodils are blooming well." Blooming well what?

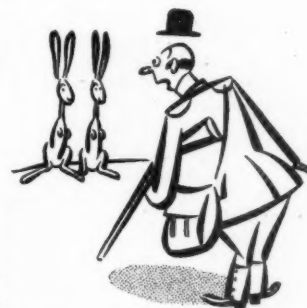
A veteran music-hall artist recalls an open-air concert at which the performers were pelted by the audience. No turn was left unstoned.



"Every man has a story to tell," declares the heading of an advertisement. Yes, and don't the other fellows at the club know it!

"DONALD'S SKATING RINK
THREE SESSIONS DAILY."
Aberdeen Poster.

A fair allowance.



Not to be outdone by the Army, Royal Navy ratings have a theme song with the chorus "Yo-Ho-de-Ho and a Bottle of Rum."

A gamekeeper says he saw young hares running about at the end of March for the first time in his life. Whereas the young hares say they saw a gamekeeper on the same date for the first time in their lives.

"The present penal code of serving terms of imprisonment will outlive its opponents," states a writer. "Time" marches on.

A German writer claims that Adam and Eve were Aryans. They raised Cain, too.

"Are Fox-Furs Waterproof?" asks a headline. We can only say we have never seen a fox carrying an umbrella.

"If only we tried to put ourselves in the other person's place we should all get on much better," says a lecturer. Except in queues, of course.

"Bachelor Sea-Captain Weds," reads a heading. We wonder how he likes taking orders from his first mate.

Unclaimed
"Lost, Saturday, Check Tie Belt of Costume. Reward. Twins."
Northampton Paper.

The best place during a very high wind is, we are told, indoors. Provided, of course, the very high wind doesn't get the same idea?



Recently an illusionist demonstrated how it was possible to enter a house in spite of locked doors and windows. A successful post-war career as a vacuum-cleaner salesman seems to be indicated.

A harpist appearing in a London music-hall interrupts her performance on the instrument by nonchalantly turning several somersaults and then resumes playing. Without in the least disturbing her halo.

Flowers for Rommel

GENERAL Rommel (or Field-Marshal Rommel, if you will) is a short man, plump, round-faced and ruddy-cheeked. Rather like David or Sir Kingsley Wood, we may imagine, only not so good at harp-playing as the one, or at arithmetic as the other. I am indebted for this information about the enemy to a newspaper correspondent who signs himself Norman Smart and seems so. He has interviewed a Mrs. Fages (the *Daily Express* tells me) in her house at Sfax where Rommel was billeted for nearly three weeks. He took all the best rooms in her house, insisted on having the best plate and linen, had masses of flowers picked for his table decorations, kept an Italian general outside in the garden under canvas, and when he went away to Sousse (and beyond it) took the plate, the linen and some of the furniture with him. Probably he took the Italian general too in a wheelbarrow. This gives me a satisfactory idea of Rommel and I do not want it altered if you please. You may think the point unimportant. You may argue that you don't care whether Rommel is tall and thin and brave, or short and red and fat. It is all one to you whether he likes flowers or hates them and whether he keeps Italian generals in a tent or in the tool-shed.

But I am not so sure. There was a time even in our own newspapers when Rommel tended to be much taller and tougher than he seems to-day, and in the eyes of German newspapermen I doubt not he is still a Nordic giant tanned by the desert sun, has loaded Mrs. Fages with kindness and courtesy, insisted on paying her for everything of hers that he has used, and only picked an occasional nosegay for his Italian general as they wandered about the garden together in the dew of the morning, talking sentimentally to each other of their wives and homes.

Rommel may be hit by a stray bullet, or (better still) by a bomb. I should like to keep my picture of him short, chubby and stout, surrounded by the flowers and cutlery of Mrs. Fages and throwing an occasional bone into the garden for his Latin confrère. And that (if all goes well) can be immortalized in history. I do not think that there should be any German historians after this war is ended. One of the principal clauses in the Treaty of Berlin should make it compulsory that all the chronicles of the various campaigns should be written under the auspices of the Allied Powers; for even if they are, so magnanimous, so

perverse in some cases are historians that there may be far too much sympathy shown for the exploits and personalities not perhaps of enemy statesmen but certainly of enemy leaders in the field.

One has only to consider the case of Hannibal. Being not too far from the ruins of Carthage General Rommel may be thinking of Hannibal even as I write these lines. Not a word of Carthaginian history, written by a Carthaginian, has survived. The Romans heartily disliked the man. His habit of destroying their armies with about a quarter of the number of troops opposed to him was intensely disagreeable to them. They accused him of treachery and cruelty, of being a barbarian, of crossing the Alps on an elephant, of losing an eye, of splitting rocks with vinegar (a most unfair device), of employing against them his unbridled Numidian cavalry. Yet how the historians (uninfluenced by any praises from his own camp) dote on him! I don't mean merely on his military achievements. These stand undeniable. You can scarcely read one of our own military strategists to-day who does not continually point out that this or that general either failed to remember, or else profited by the example Hannibal set at Trebia or Trasimene. Guns roar, tanks crash through, aeroplanes darken the skies. Fat black arrows, photographs and headlines are mingled in inextricable confusion on the pages of the popular Press. "Ah," says the military strategist quietly, "General So-and-so has-remembered his Cannæ."

Poor fellow, he was probably thinking more about his petrol supplies than his bridleless cavalry.

But the queer thing is that this adoration extends even to the personal life of the famous Carthaginian. He killed and plundered and ravaged, was beaten, fled eastward, took poison and died. Yet you find the historian not only saying "Though calumny has done its bitterest against him Hannibal dazzles the admiration and takes captive the heart," but even observing that they "can find no speck on his fair fame" as a husband and a gentleman. "There is only one reference to be found in certain sources to a love affair with a Bruttian girl, but the authenticity is by no means sure, and it is in any case too vague to arouse our curiosity."

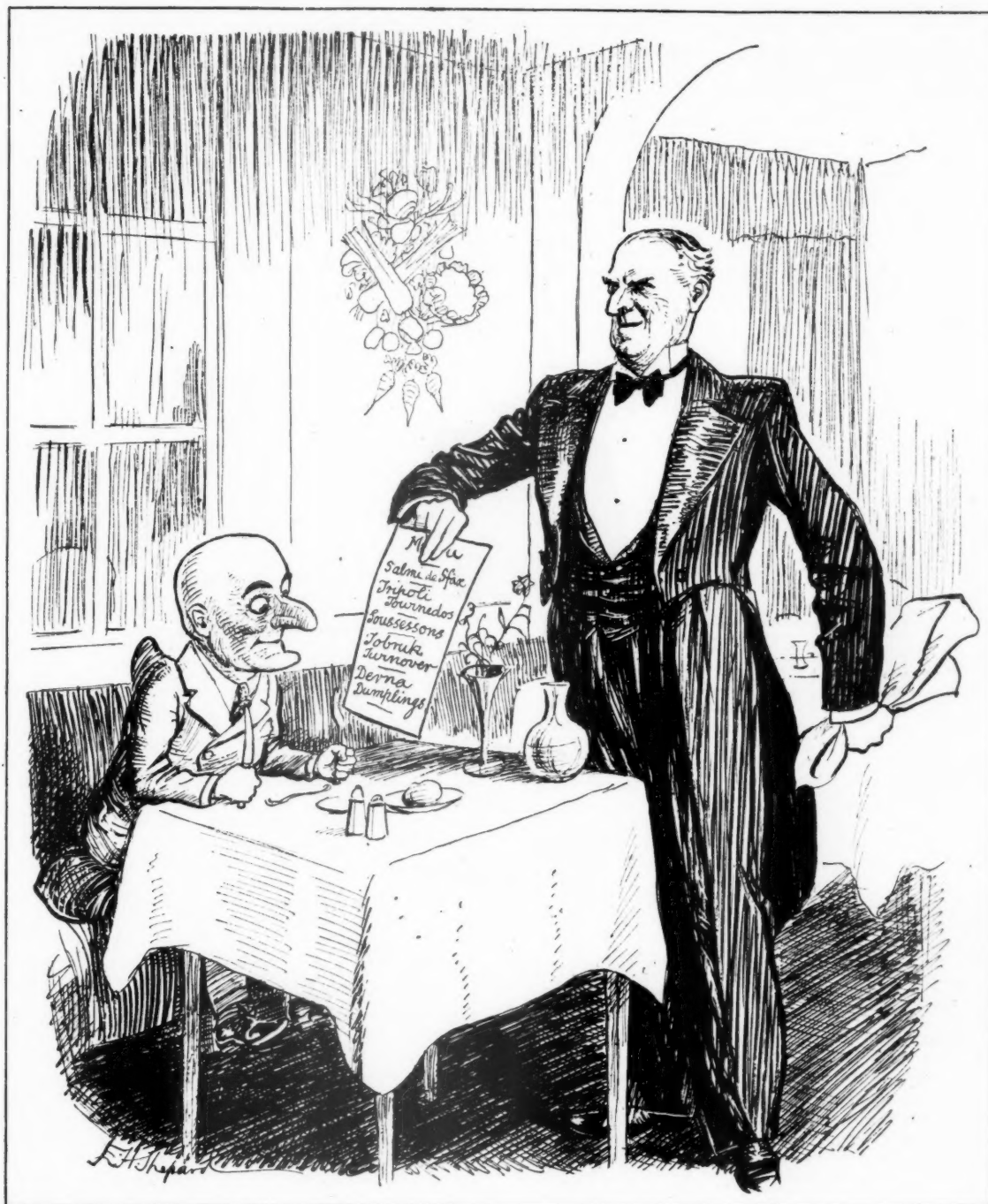
I don't know what the historian means by "our curiosity." It arouses mine. I should like to hear more about this Bruttian girl. One gets the impression that historians would have been really pleased if Hannibal, in the simple piety of his Phœnician heart, had dashed himself against the gates of Rome, taken it, sacked it, razed it to the ground, and made it a mere province of Carthage and its people, Moloch-worshippers to a man. Anyone can see how annoying an event of that kind could have been. Civilization, as we know it, would have been destroyed.

Of Hannibal, beloved by posterity, let so much have been said. He may have been tall, slender and grave, with a long black beard, but I can well believe that a farmer's wife in the wake of his destroying armies might have murmured to a Roman annalist, "What! That fat little man on an elephant who took away all my food!" So let it be with Rommel. The future can say of him what it likes. I see him, as I said before, mounting his staff car, rubicund, adipose, but undersized, the silver coffee-pot of Mrs. Fages in his right hand, and in his left a bunch of forget-me-nots or whatever flowers may be grown in the gardens of Algiers. And always trotting behind him there is an Italian general.

EVOC.



"If you listen very carefully, you can distinctly hear the roar of depth-charges."



CHEZ VICTOIRE

"Bizerta hot-pot and Tunis on toast to order, Sir. Ready soon."

[The Food Minister has suggested putting the V dish on the menu of every restaurant or public-house where meals are served.]



"Another death-ray test, Johnson—do you mind?"

Refreshments

RAILWAY refreshment-rooms, as we all of us know, are really called *buffets*, which, as we still all know, is a French word meaning refreshment-rooms. Philologists say that refreshment-rooms were first called *buffets* on purpose, like the Greeks calling the Furies whatever they did call them to make them less so. Philologists add that this was an easy one, and they are sorry to be obvious, but refreshment-rooms are like that; and, furthermore, they will be interested to know if, after the war—during which refreshment-rooms, like the people in them, are not there for pleasure—more people will call them *buffets*, or less. The only other thing I need say about the word *buffet* is that people mostly use it now, I mean when they call it "boufay," to cheer the porters up.

The average railway refreshment-room is easy to find. I don't mean that it is averagely easy to find a refreshment-room in a railway-station but that the average in refreshment-rooms is easy to assess because they all look alike. This is because they were all built at the same time, that is, at the same time as the station, which would have been built whenever it was that railways first came into force. Scientists say that it is probable that no one designed the

first railway refreshment-room; through the ages it had always been there, waiting to be put into practice. I know that nowadays you will sometimes come across a railway refreshment-room of modern or simplified design, all pale-blue paint and corners, but any such deviation from the norm only makes the norm more so, and is doomed to failure.

The main feature of any railway refreshment-room is, naturally enough, its counter. This goes the whole or most of the length of the room and has a marble top. This is because the veins in marble look something like tea or coffee marks, so that any customers leaning on such a counter, and keeping other customers away from it, will be induced to take their arms off the counter at once because they thought one of the veins was a tea or coffee mark, when they will find that it was, and has got on their sleeve. This, psychologists say, sums up the whole of human nature in one melancholy flash.

I need hardly say that the more exciting side of a counter is the side behind it, because psychologists long ago established that the other side of any counter has always had an extraordinary fascination for humanity. This is nowhere so strong as in a railway refreshment-room, where

there is so much space behind the counter and so much happening. Customers standing at one end of the counter and leaning right over can sometimes see a large box full of meat pies, and this gives them a funny feeling of having provided the pies and indeed of being responsible for the whole refreshment-room. Customers who can see round the tea or coffee urn have another funny feeling, this time more of guilt and reluctance, as in the heart of anyone ordering tea or coffee anywhere is the deeply-embedded superstition that to watch tea or coffee being made by anyone else, I mean if you are paying for it, is to tamper with providence. People ordering tea or coffee over a railway refreshment-counter have one other peculiarity; when they say they want it without sugar they always hope that someone will tell them how good and clever they are; and no one ever does.

The little tables and chairs dotted round a refreshment-room are doubly interesting because the chairs are always either occupied by someone else or empty; this, to the people wanting an empty chair, is thus either what they would expect or what they wouldn't, and it has never been decided whether getting what it does expect or what it doesn't causes humanity the more surprise. I should add that an empty chair in a refreshment-room is not always an unoccupied chair, as the occupier is so often at the counter fetching more tea, so that there is a rule that anyone about to sit down in an empty chair must give the person in the next chair one of those placatorily guarded half-glances which humanity has been so good at ever since primitive man; or even, in extreme cases, ask outright if anyone is sitting there. The danger here, psychologists warn us, is that two people *who have spoken to each other* and are sitting at the same table have called each other's bluff and can no longer pretend they are deaf and dumb, let alone not real people and not even there either. However, psychologists add, it is quite possible to re-establish this mutual attitude by five minutes of eating and reading, as long as neither side breaks down and asks if the clock is right.

I should say a word about the clock in a railway refreshment-room, or rather about the people who look at it, because as a rule there is nothing wrong with the clock itself. But the public has always found it curiously difficult to trust a refreshment-room clock. Psychologists have been working on this subject for years, but all they can say definitely is that human nature cannot trust more than one clock at a time, and human nature pins a savage faith to the clock on the platform. Intertwined with this mental conflict, psychologists add, is the suspicion, innate and still persistent, that the people who sell you food and drink over a railway refreshment-counter are anxious to sell you more, and keep the clock slow to fool you; or, some psychologists add, it may be that by association people unconsciously think of such clocks as their own dining-room clocks, and therefore wrong.

A few more words about the people themselves. People staring at the back of the neck of the person in front of them at the counter are telling themselves that when once this person, who seems worldly and successful enough, has been served then they will be too, and the harder they stare the quicker it will happen. Anyone sitting at a table and looking up at the ceiling has a consciously philosophic nature; anyone looking under the table has a small suitcase there. People who stand by the counter with a large suitcase a few feet off are anti-social; people with an equally large suitcase wedged between them and the counter are anti-social too, but more timidly and doggedly so; while people who stand in the middle of a crowded refreshment-room holding a cup of tea in one hand and their luggage in

the other, and being bumped into whenever they lift the cup and saucer to their mouths, are not anything special that psychologists can put a name to. All that psychologists can say about them is that not only do they think they are looking even more foolish than they in fact are, they are also looking even more foolish than they think they do.

Native

HE will return again
To the little farm and the orchard under the hill,
Between the boles of the cider-apple trees,
To the familiar porch
Vine-garlanded and warm with sunlight still;
After a world of wandering he will come
Not as an exile turning back to ease,
Not as a tired traveller hastening home,
Not as a soldier suddenly at peace—
But he will stand
In the well-loved and well-remembered place
Armoured and adamant, and in his hand
Power burning as a torch:
Europe's Pucelle, and her smile on his face.

And then, the fierce day won
And passion dwindled in him, drained of thought,
The fleeting vision fading in his eyes,
He will sit down a little in the sun
And con his homecoming.

A simple man knows little he should need
When he is free; and peace, that is not bought
Or bargained for, hovers his house and hearth.
He is content with just a little earth
To plough and plant in Autumn, and in Spring
To be his private share of paradise:
Such are all simple men, their stock and seed.

So he will come once more
To the orchard under the hill, and the little farm
With white doves strutting outside the open door . . .
And after the breaking conflict, calm
Will close over his acres; and peace, the prayed for.
M. E. R.

"Mineral drinks are so often according to Miss Eleano Universities, that Service men drinks are 'driven to drink by acquiring a taste for it.'—*Manchester Evening News*.

So it seems.

FOR THOSE AT SEA

NOW more than ever before are we dependent for our livelihood upon the courage and steadfastness of our gallant crews "that go down to the sea in ships." You, by your generous gifts to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, can help to alleviate their sufferings, and to make their task less arduous. We rely on you because we know that, like them, you will not let us down. All donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Up With Keys

"WHAT do you do," asked the new Regimental policeman, "when you can't have a fire in the Guard-room?"

"Do without toast, I suppose," suggested Sam, one of the other two not on duty.

"We always have a fire in here," insisted his colleague, whose name was Joe. "Nowhere else to boil a kettle. Must be tea all the time in the Guard-room."

The new man stared at the huge blazing fire in the open range and said incredulously "Do you mean to tell me you have a fire like that in here in the height of summer?"

"I dunno. I wasn't here last summer. Stan!" Joe called to the Sergeant-in-charge of the Regimental Police, "what do you do for tea in the summer if you don't have a fire?"

"Always have a fire in here," said the Sergeant absently, rubbing the back of his long thin neck as he came in from the corridor leading to the cells. He approached the table and stared down at a pile of charge-sheets on top of which was a pair of small keys on a ring. "Found what these are yet?" he inquired, picking them up.

The new man said "No. I asked George, like you said, but he didn't know unless they're the keys of the big cell."

"He knows — well where the keys of the big cell are," said the Sergeant. He thought for a few moments. "I been down with keys before, you know where you are when you're down with keys, but it's a — when you get up with keys."

Sam suggested suddenly "You know that room in B block, that little room where they used to keep the P.A.D. stores for the —"

"No," the Sergeant said. "I thought of that."

"I give it up," said Sam. He looked at the clock and said "Joe, you coming to fetch the dinner?"

"Okay," said Joe. When they had gone out the Sergeant went to the glass-fronted cupboard where the keys were kept and stared at the rows of hooks in it.

"Who's got the gym stores key?" he asked suddenly.

The new policeman found the Key book among the papers on the table and ran his finger down the entries. "Some feller named . . . I can't read it," he said. "Spells 'gymnasium' with two y's and a z, anyway."

"Oh, him. G-y-m-n-y-a-z-u-m? That's all right. I thought he was still on leave. For a week we been having a feller that spells it right but forgets to book the keys in when he brings 'em back. This one can't spell, but you know where his keys are. So it can't be them." He stared into the cupboard again, cogitating silently for minutes on end. Indeed Joe and Sam returned with the dinner before he spoke.

Joe came in first, kicking the door open, and Sam sidled after him, kicking it shut.

"Do you like rice?" Joe instantly said to the new policeman.

"Because we didn't bring any," said Sam before he could reply.

They dumped a couple of square dixies of steaming food on the table and the Sergeant turned from the cupboard, sniffing. "What, again?" he said.

"They've got a hell of a lot to use up yet," said Joe, pulling a stack of five large white plates out of the front of his unbuttoned battle-dress blouse as if taking out a pocket-book. "Tich was on the ration-waggon the day they collected it and he told me there's enough there to

last till next Christmas. We'll be having mutton for dinner for quite a while, fellers."

"You mean they'll be having mutton to cook," said Sam. "What we get is what's left when they've done with it. I —"

The door was flung open again and George, the Regimental Policeman on duty, leaned in crying "Visitin' officer!"

A tall young major ducked past the looped-up black-out curtain and stood staring round amiably till the Sergeant had spread out the Visitors' Book for him to sign.

When Joe had led him out again to see the Adjutant the Sergeant observed "That bird's perishin' young for a major."

"We've all got to start," said Sam. "I bet they used to say you were perishin' young for a sergeant, Stan."

"I was perishin' young for a sergeant. And that bird's perishin' young for a major."

"A couple of strong characters," said Sam, ladling George's dinner on to a plate and putting it into the oven. "Do you like beans? We didn't bring any."

"Me? No, thanks," said the new policeman, accepting the plateful Sam now handed to him.

As they sat down to eat Joe came in again.

"Stan," he said to the Sergeant, "I been thinking. There's only one place extra keys can come from: off a bunch."

The Sergeant stared at him hopefully in silence.

"The only bunch that'd still look big enough," Joe continued, "if a couple of keys came off it, is the cook-house bunch. I bet those two are the keys of that little outhouse where they keep the swill-tubs. If you like I'll go up there now and try them."

The Sergeant handed them over at once without a word, and Joe went out again. "Bring back a tin of milk!" called Sam, with his mouth full.

While Joe was gone the Sergeant mastered his agitation enough to eat a little, but not until Joe returned, bringing good news, was he easy in his mind.

"You sure?" he persisted.

"Yes, they fit all right." Joe opened the cupboard door and hung them on the hook labelled "Cook-house." "But look, Stan, the Adjutant says he wants the key of that cupboard in his office."

"He can't have it," said the Sergeant, tranquilly continuing to eat. "Nobody's seen that since Captain Wass-name left."

"Down with keys again, Stan?" Sam said.

The Sergeant gave a satisfied affirmative grunt.

Joe put a tin of milk on the table and said to the new policeman "I could have brought some fresh, but it isn't worth it, is it?"

R. M.

Of Authors and Authorities

CUT down on liquor? Yes. And yet I think A poet more than most deserves a drink. He needs it in his business: you could call The stuff for him industrial alcohol.

"Domesticated lady desires post as Companion-housekeeper: sea preferred."—*Advt. in "Manchester Guardian."*
Forsaken Mermen, please note.

Explanation For My Aunt

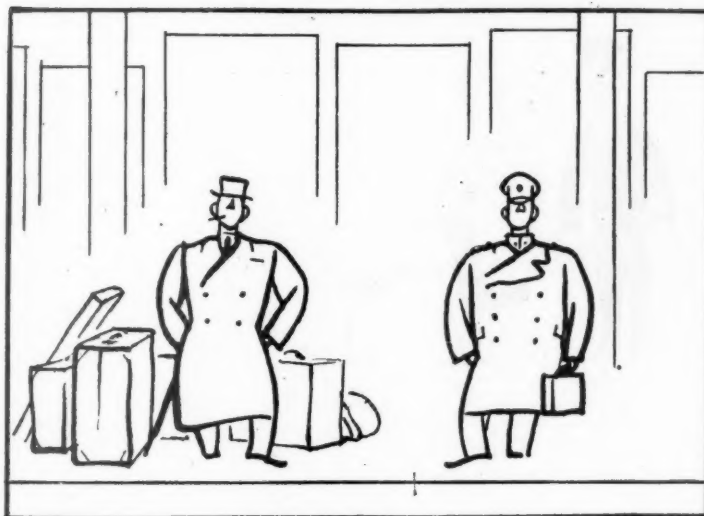
CERTAINLY I'll help you with the washing-up, aunt—it seems only about five minutes ago that we were doing the breakfast things—and perhaps it would cheer you up a little if we talked about post-war planning. I know you don't enjoy discussing the Beveridge Report, because you've often said so, and I'm quite ready to give in to you about that—though mind you, aunt, you'll have to come to it in the end. But there really are quite a lot of things we ought to make up our minds about, and I'm not like some people, I definitely *don't* feel that the older generation isn't worth a hoot and just simply doesn't count. I think it perfectly likely that you may *have* an idea of some sort, and it might even have value.

There's town-planning, for instance, which really is going to affect all of us who are still alive after the war. Do you want a steep roof, or a medium one, or a flat one? The flat ones, of course, will be divine for sun-bathing.

Dear me, aunt, what a pity! That was the lid of the vegetable dish, and you've broken it. Well, you can't match it or get it riveted, naturally, but I think you might put your name down on a waiting-list for a set of utility dishes one of these days. I dare say we shall have collected a whole lot of them by the time the war's over, if we go on doing the washing-up ourselves.

Aunt! Please, please don't be so reactionary. I see you're one of those people who want things to go back to what they were before the war. Surely you understand that we shall have to keep on all the restrictions and things for years and *years* after the Armistice? That's one reason why post-war planning is so important. We've got to get thoroughly used to it all. It's no good at all your telling me that you can't get used to lighting your own kitchen fire and cooking your own meals. If it's any comfort to you, most probably there'll be practically no fuel allowed when we get into the next phase, and as to meals, I don't suppose you'll get more than one a day and you'll have to have that at the Centre. No, aunt, I can't tell you how you're to get there. If you feel you can't manage the three and a half miles at your age you must just trust to lorry-hopping, I suppose. Though actually, I imagine petrol will practically be non-existent quite soon. There may be a short cut across the

THE CHANGING HABITS OF BRITAIN WEEK-END LUGGAGE



1



2

fields—only I expect the fields will all be ploughed over then, and people won't be allowed to set foot in them.

Give me the forks, aunt, and I'll dry them. I see the pantry-cloth is in ribbons and you certainly can't spare any coupons to get new ones. I quite expect the clothes-ration to be cut in half any day now, and I suppose after the war we shall go into some kind of regulation clothing. Slacks, I hope. Aunt! Really, if you're going to break things at this rate you'll be practically

helping Hitler. The one thing he *wants* is that we should all do without everything and get discouraged.

If you said what I thought you said about our Government, then you have totally misunderstood everything they've been trying to tell us. I think it would be a good idea if you were to read a book I've got called *The Future isn't the Same As the Past*. It'll sort of get your mind prepared for what it's going to be like when it's all quite different.

E. M. D.



"... and this month I've saved one hundredweight of coal, six therms of gas, two gallons of fuel oil, seventeen units of electricity and fourteen quarts of hot water."

The Phoney Phleet

XV.—H.M.S. "Drowning Sun"

OUR friend Commander (E) George Syme Had been quiescent for a time: The mighty brain had had a rest Recharging. Now, with freshened zest, That super-cortex turned once more To coping with the U-boat war.

He started *ab initio*
By proving that the U-boats go
Beneath the surface. "And," said he,
"Down there of course we cannot see.
You can't expect our chaps to fight
In, literally, zero light.
Therefore let us illuminate
The sea below us; then we wait
Until a submarine comes past,
And give her an almighty blast."

Their Lordships said this should be done,
And fitted out the *Drowning Sun*
With underwater Neon lamps
Of ninety-seven million amps.
(Too many? Well, just call it lots.
Not amps? Then candle-power, or watts.
And Neon wouldn't work? Please go
And boil yourself.)

Where was I? Oh,
Of course. The *Drowning Sun* went out
To Forty West and cruised about

That longitude until, at last,
A German submarine came past.
This was the moment. Old George Syme
Engulfed a hasty gin-and-lime
And then applied the Neon switch.

There were results: but not those which
Had been expected. From the start
The U-boat took no further part
In the experiment, for she,
Thanks to G. Syme, could *also* see
Exactly what she must avoid
And batted off. Syme was annoyed.
But adequate description fails
To sketch his sentiments when WHALES
Attracted by the brilliant light
Came pouring in from left and right,
From east and west, starboard and port,
In heavy throngs (or schools), which fought
For precedence with frenzied lust.
The *Drowning Sun*, it seemed, would bust
Compressed by this cetaceous scrum.
But worse befalls! See where they come!
New hordes of haddock, sharks in shoals,
Columns of catfish, Dover soles,
Ling, dace and oysters; till the eye
Scans the horizon to espy
A single acre, pole or rod
Untenanted by some damn cod!

You ask, and you're within your rights,
Why Syme did not turn out the lights?
He tried to; but some dolt had bent
The gadget, ohm or instrument,
And it had jammed.

Things went from bad
To worse. At length the vessel had
No option as to where she went.
She was entirely impotent,
Obeying the collective wish
Of fifty thousand million fish
Who steered a course—don't ask me why—
For Liverpool. Raised up on high,
Completely fish-borne, *Drowning Sun*
Reached England in a record run,
Shoved miles above high-water-mark
In what I think's called Sefton Park
Along with an enormous weight
Of fish who'd left the thing too late.

Was Syme the least bit penitent?
Not he. "It's true," he said, "I meant
My whatnot to defeat the Fritz,
But hang it, I don't think that it's
Too bad. I've brought back skate and bream
Beyond Lord Woolton's wildest dream.
And though I didn't land a Hun,
There is a place for everyone."

H. J. Talking

EVERY year all scientists are invited by B. Smith to enter a competition, which takes the form of a Scientific General Knowledge Paper. What award awaits the winner has never been really settled, as so far no one has reached a sufficiently high standard not to be

dealt with by such phrases as "Proxime Accessit" and "Also Ran." Here is a specimen paper:

1. Mention three things you can't do with logarithms.
2. Show how increased air-pressure affects Mother-love.
3. Explain the principle of the blow-pipe as used by (a) plumbers, (b) pigmies.
4. What is a good way to keep women out of a laboratory?
5. Invent something and explain how it works.
6. Why are so many famous scientists peers? Is this a higher percentage than in the population at large?
7. If the book says "Use a retort" and you haven't one, what is the next best thing to use?
8. What breed is the Great Bear—brown, grizzly, polar?
9. What happens if you mix strychnine, arsenic, and prussic acid? Are the results better than if they are used separately?
10. Here is a graph—suggest what it might be a graph of:

re

Every brain-worker needs sometimes to relax, my method being to wear a made-up tie and speak dialect. Unless one has such relaxations, jangled is what one's nerves become, and this may lead to chewing. At various times I have found myself chewing a mantelpiece, a Dictionary of Compliments and my wife, this last causing cross-mastication and hence renewed nerve-strain. When I was an undergraduate my favourite recreation was rowing, and this, provided I was not rushed, refreshed me fairly well. I found that if I rowed slowly I could continue for long periods and do myself more good than by mere spurts. Training tended to increase my rate, but heavy feeding and thick underclothes kept me steady. In my third year I was dropped from the College boat, but being a kind-hearted college it did not want to depress me and made me Demonstrator in Ethics instead. I had to commit various acts on which the lecturer commented, usually unfavourably.

My main difficulty at Oxford was roll-calls, which occurred very early in the morning and not, like posts, at intervals throughout the day. I found that when I got back to bed I took a long time getting off to sleep again and my cheeks grew wan in consequence. So wan did they grow that the dean sent me a bottle of cordial he had made himself from a Latin recipe in the archives of Westminster Abbey, but it was a very intoxicating cordial with a delayed action. I noticed nothing when I drank it, but later, during a lecture on "Algebra: Queen of the Sciences," I suddenly rose from my seat and delivered a speech warmly defending the Welsh.

On the whole, gamesome is what I was at Oxford. I climbed on roofs; I debugged the Junior Bursar who wore heliotrope pants; I hunted an Organ Scholar with otter-hounds. Many thought me to be the gayest undergraduate of my year. Indeed, my work rather suffered from this, as the only time I got for it was Sunday afternoons. I discovered that the best way to get education out of Oxford was to attend helpful lectures arranged by Women's Institutes, where many subjects were dealt with in a concise and informative way.

At the end of your stay in a university you have to write answers to examination papers, and these are read by examiners who then ask you questions face to face. If they are uncertain whether you know anything they are apt to ask many such. My policy was to write replies which would leave my academic status moot and rely on repartee to pull me through the viva. I wrote in a very cryptic style, not referring to facts but only to the names of specialists, and these I made probable but foreign. When the day came for the oral they began by manifesting

curiosity about Franz Czece, whose theory I had declared to be contradictory and misleading. I said he had most of his work printed privately, was fond of trout-fishing and frequently contradicted himself. They then asked how I knew of him, and I said he was the godfather of my old nurse. Next they asked me what his theory actually was, and I said I would give it to them in his own words, these being any guttural sounds I could think of on the spur of the moment. After a little of this the chairman was taken ill with acute depression and boils, and they meanly took the opportunity to give me an aegrotat.

I have never found postal tuition satisfactory as I tend to put letters in the wrong envelopes. I was once taking a correspondence course in Haymaking, and by mistake sent in an essay on Baccarat I had written for the magazine at our local almshouses. This so fired the enthusiasm of the tutor that he threw up his post at the college and went to Monte Carlo, so that Haymaking had to be dropped from the syllabus and I worked out the remainder of my fees in Painting on Bone. Another method of learning I have tried is Adult Free Discipline Classes. These were held by B. Smith's aunts at a public-house in our district. On the bar were text-books in everything you can think of, and anyone who wanted to read one between drinks could do so. If you felt like writing an exercise there was nothing to stop you, and as the books had answers at the back, encouraging is what such exercises proved to be. These aunts had come to Education via Folk-Dancing, and were then on the way to Raffia.





"Don't know why he should be called 'breadwinner'—never stood in a queue in his life."

Blot on the 'Scutcheon

HERE in the advertising space
Is one who, for a modest fee,
Expresses a desire to "trace"
My ancestors. Not he.

I will not have his curious nose
Rootling my forbears past and gone
Lest doing so he might expose
My far-off Uncle John.

He was a scandal and a blot,
Nay, worse if whisperings be true.
I never heard precisely what
He did or didn't do.

Whether 'twas drink's engaging lure
That marred a full but ill-spent life,
Or trouble with a signature,
Or someone else's wife,

Or other such back-slidings, I
Tried in my youth to learn but failed;

I got a negative reply;
My three aunts flushed, or paled.

One sordid detail reached my ear,
That he at last was shovelled hence
To some new country and, I fear,
Not at his own expense.

Yet somehow, though his ways were dark,
He was perhaps not wholly bad.
Assuredly he left a mark;
He must have been a lad.

One might, on second thoughts, engage
Some searching nose to prise him out;
To read that frail but foamy page
Would be good sport, no doubt.

But better leave him where he lies
In the deep past, with all those games.
And, now I think, the same applies
To my far Uncle James. DUM-DUM.



NEVER SATISFIED

"Only a box of rotten ships! And I wanted a fairy cycle!"

[Adolf Hitler was born on April 20 1889.]

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Monday, April 12th.—House of Commons: We Have Paid, But . . .

Tuesday, April 13th.—House of Commons: More On Taxes—More Talk, That is.

Wednesday, April 14th.—House of Commons: Taxes Again.

Thursday, April 15th.—House of Commons: Colonial Debate.

Monday, April 12th.—Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD, who has coined some excellent phrases in his time, recently remarked that pounds, shillings and pence had become meaningless symbols. That remark was hotly criticised, and Mr. GREENWOOD had to defend it with all his not inconsiderable forensic skill.

But to look at the House of Commons to-day, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir KINGSLEY WOOD, presented the biggest Budget in the history of the nation—and that means in the history of Europe—one might have thought that Mr. GREENWOOD's contention had received general assent and acceptance.

For where were the seething crowds of yesteryear? Where the Members clamouring for seats in the cold grey light of dawn? Where the pleading constituents vainly seeking tickets for the Strangers' Galleries? Where the excitement, the chatter, the sudden hush, the long lines of economists, straining to hear?

Where, in fact, the distinctive and unmistakable "atmosphere" that used to make Budget Day unique in the Parliamentary year?

To-day the House was half empty, the scarlet benches staring up at the elaborately gilded ceiling in a most nonchalant way, the M.P.s who did attend sitting about in attitudes appropriate to a local Drainage Bill in more impressionable times. Even the entry of the Chancellor, formerly the signal for wild cheering (tinged equally with hope and apprehension) produced no more than a polite "Yer—er—er"—which is the Parliamentary method of mild applause.

Sir KINGSLEY obviously expected a bigger "hand," and Sir EDWARD CAMPBELL, his faithful impresario, seemed about to wave him to the wings again, to make a new (and better applauded) entry.

However, the Chancellor, with the instinct of an old trouper, sensed that it was a "cold" House anyway, and

went to the footlights, while Sir EDWARD looked in stern reproof at the non-cheering audience.

Mr. W. ALLAN REID, Conservative Member for Derby, seated comfortably on the back bench, folded his arms, bowed his head, closed his eyes, and sat listening (presumably) enraptured.

Sir KINGSLEY told how we were giving as good as we received from the United States in lease-lend, and how we were paying-as-we-went to an astonishing degree. It was hard going, but for our own eventual good, for we should have less to pay in the way of



Mr. Harold Skimpole. "Some pounds, odd shillings, and halfpence I think were mentioned; I don't attach value to money."

Bleak House.

"All these pounds, shillings and pence are meaningless symbols."

Mr. Arthur Greenwood on the Budget.

interest on debts if we kept the said debts comparatively small.

And, keep down expenditure as we would, there was still a handsome amount to find, for the war was now costing some £15,000,000 a day, and likely to cost even more. We had to find, in the coming year, the sum of £6,000,000,000. There is something of the sadist in all Chancellors of the Exchequer, and even gentle Sir KINGSLEY could not quite overcome this hereditary taint. Several times he spoke of the delights of increasing income tax as a means of getting more for the Exchequer. Only the beads of perspiration and the slightly bulging

eyes of his victims told of their silent sufferings and of the agonies of anticipation that strange silence covered. Then the Chancellor would switch off to something like tobacco or beer, and it would be the turn of the staff and the Labour M.P.s to sweat and wince.

However, there is to be nothing on income tax. Labour M.P.s looked stern; Communist Mr. GALLACHER (who, when the Chancellor first rose, bad him "Do his stuff") almost assumed the black cap. But there was a somewhat stifled cheer of relief from every part of the House, all the same. Mr. REID stirred uneasily, still with bowed head.

Beer? Everybody looked for Lady ASTOR, but she had gone. Beer . . . Sir KINGSLEY turned the skewer in the wound . . . Beer—1d. a pint more. (A slight moan.) Whisky and other spirits . . . 2s. 4d. a bottle more. Tobacco . . . 4½d. or 5d. on the ounce of tobacco, 1½d. or 2d. on ten cigarettes. (A perceptible shudder ran through the House, and Mr. REID, in his fastness, sat bolt upright, staring into space.) But N.A.A.F.I. customers would still pay no more. (A cheer of genuine pleasure.)

Entertainment . . . said the Chancellor. Members sat forward, eager to hear the worst. They did not. The Chancellor referred them to a White Paper, merely announcing that the tax was to go up. If any of the Members were able to make head or tail of the tables in the White Paper, your scribe congratulates them.

Sir KINGSLEY began to gather up his papers. Was this, then, *all*? Was this to be the extent of our additional sufferings, after three and a half years of war?

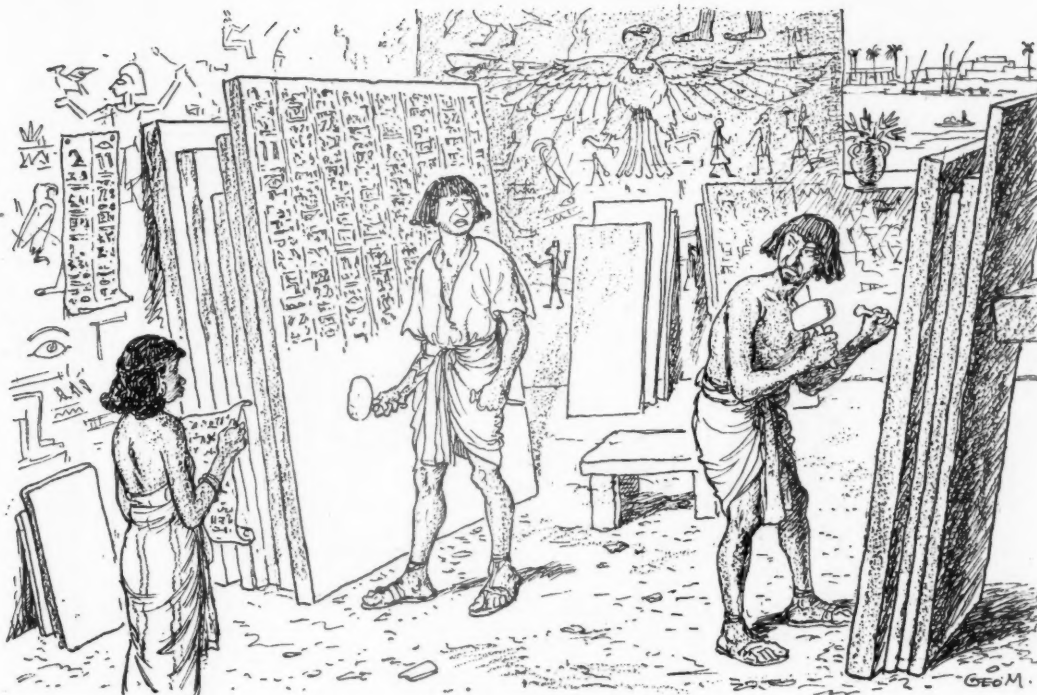
It was. The Chancellor, after a little peroration about fighting for peace and freedom, swept his notes into a despatch case, and sat down. Mr. REID sighed and went out. And another War Budget had been presented—surely the most painless ever unfolded to an apprehensive House and nation.

This time there really was a cheer. And the House drifted away to its tea—or perchance to add a little to the yield from the beer or spirits tax.

Strange, the way we make history in the Commons House of Parliament. Strange, and very thrilling in its quietness and simplicity.

The rest of the day's discussion was anti-climax.

Tuesday, April 13th.—Either Mr. PETHICK-LAWRENCE, who was the first Opposition speaker to-day, was carried away by his own eloquence or



"I keep on forgetting to write on both sides of the stone."

he had prepared his notes too far in advance. For he began his speech by declaring that Budget Day was always something of a festival with the House, which was apt to be carried away by the glamour of the occasion. Any less accurate description of the previous day's proceedings it would be hard to conceive.

However, he clearly meant well, and the House beamed on the Chancellor, who sat cherubically on the Treasury Bench, with slender Mr. RALPH ASSHETON, his Financial Secretary, beside him.

Most of the day was given up to speeches that were complimentary to the Chancellor and his Budget. The Chancellor, at any rate, appreciated it all.

The early part of the day was brightened by a bargaining match between Sir JAMES GRIGG, the War Minister, and Mr. R. R. STOKES, his Chief Inquisitor. Sir JAMES won hands down, and Mr. STOKES's come-back was this: "You are in great danger—for I am almost invariably right!"

Strangely enough, it was the Minister who blushed. As he had covered his

face with his hands, perhaps—just perhaps—he was laughing.

Wednesday, April 14th.—Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, Foreign Secretary, replied to some question in a way which led to Mr. MUFF commenting that we wanted "another Palmerston" at the F.O. Whereupon, Mr. DAVID KIRKWOOD (not usually a devoted adherent of the Conservative Party) announced in his terrific Scottish accent that: "EDEN is good enough for us!"

Mr. EDEN blushing accepted the ovation this sally aroused.

There was lots of wit about to-day. This sort of thing:

Colonel OLIVER STANLEY, Colonial Secretary: We are giving the natives of Backobeyond gin.

Lady ASTOR: Is that not bad for their moral, spiritual and physical health?

Colonel STANLEY: I myself occasionally indulge in gin without suffering in

any of those respects. (*Laughter and cheers.*)

Lady ASTOR: You are wrong. Less gin on the front bench! (*Laughter.*)

Mr. SHINWELL: And more ginger. (*Cheers.*)

Colonel STANLEY: Gin is half-way to ginger. (*Laughter and cheers.*)

Terrific, it was. Members laughed their bloomin' heads off. A little later, Miss RATHBONE insisted that the restaurants of our land be ordered—not asked—to serve iced water to all who wanted it, but Mr. WILLIAM MABANE, of the Food Ministry, said no American visitor had complained of the alleged drought.

Thursday, April 15th.—Verbatim account of a question by Mr. RUPERT DE LA BERE (Con., Evesham): "Why is it, who is it, what is it—why does he not get on with it? In short, Mr. Speaker, it is not!"

Perhaps we never shall know.

The House of Commons went on to talk about the Colonies.

Most Members were apparently seeking the answer to Mr. DE LA BERE's conundrum. Or, at any rate, they were not in the Chamber.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"I'm just going to the fishmonger's to see if they have no fish."

What a Word!

WE sometimes think the newspapers are written deliberately to annoy us, especially on Saturday, when we start the day in a calm spirit. Look at this:

"We will know Sir Kingsley Wood's views on the next sitting day of the House of Commons."

Why not "shall"? The place is a leading article, not a headline. No space is saved. Indeed there are large and ugly gaps on either side of "will."

* * * * *
Then "personnel," that beastly unnecessary importation, flaunts itself in almost every column:

"Rommel is evacuating key personnel and technicians. . . ."

Why not "key men"? I do not know how many wars we have fought; but we have fought them all, and won most of them, without the assistance of "personnel." The common justification is that it aids and relieves those poor official fish who want to refer to "officers and men" or "men and women" and for some obscure reason do not want to use those terms. But Rommel, I will bet a bag of beans, is not evacuating any female personnel, so that cock will not fight here.

It does not fight with great effect anywhere. Earlier in this contest we made a few remarks about a passage in the Admiralty dispatch on the action off the River Plate: "One

shell killed or wounded all the bridge personnel except the captain." The other day we chanced to meet a gentleman who frankly and charmingly confessed that he was the author of the sentence. What was not so good, he defended it. But, by a happy chance, a captain in His Majesty's Navy was present; and he strongly supported our contention that it is not fitting to describe the captain of one of His Majesty's ships as "bridge personnel." If "officers and men" is considered to be snobbish or wordy, why not use the democratic and brief word "man," employed by Nelson in a famous signal: "Every man on the bridge was killed. . . ."

"Ah," says some ass, "but perhaps there were Wrens on the bridge?" Well there were not. And, if there were, we should not be dismayed. We should then say "Everyone on the bridge. . ."

"Bridge personnel," indeed! Would anyone describe the Lords of the Admiralty as "Board personnel"? My hat! My aunt! My foot!

The only proper function of "personnel" that we can see is to make a contrast with "matériel"—and we shouldn't exactly rave about that. You might say, for example: "Losses of personnel in H.M.S. — were not severe; damage to matériel was heavy." No one, however, would think of saying that. You would say "The So-and-so's turret was destroyed. The after-funnel was blown to bits. The steering-gear was put out of action," and so on: and you would not care how long it took you to say it. Why, therefore, you should boggle at "officers and men" we cannot tell.

We are told that the horrid habit was begun in the Civil Defence (then A.R.P.) world by officials baffled by the presence of two sexes. But here again, if "men and women" was considered an impossible expression, surely some English generic term—"workers," "members," "servants," "fighters"—should have been preferred to "personnel"?

EXERCISE

Name the source of these quotations:

"Personnel created he them."

"Who giveth this personnel in marriage?"

"O female personnel, in our hour of ease,

Uncertain, coy, and hard to please . . ."

"England expects that all personnel will do their duty."

"Personnel's personnel for a' that."

* * * * *

The "small-tooth comb" has long been a favourite with many. You examine a proposal, a Bill, or somebody's accounts "with a small-tooth comb." Not a very pleasant figure of speech, if you remember some of the special occasions on which that instrument is used; but nothing much against it. Now, it seems, some of our colleagues have forgotten its origin; they put the hyphen in the wrong place, and write about a "small tooth-comb." And what a "tooth-comb" is we cannot imagine.

* * * * *

Among these moans may we mention the B.B.C. announcer who, having spoken of "Tun~~s~~" in the good old English way, in the next breath, mincingly pronounces "Bizerta" "Bizairta"?

"As to" rages everywhere still. "The question as to whether the Labour Party will do something or other," says a famous statesman, "remains open." Why not "The question whether"? Nobody says "The question as to why," or "The question as to what." They will, no doubt. One day, maybe, we shall hear the man with the soda-water siphon say "Say as to when . . ."

* * * * *

We were the first to fight against the wicked word "aerodrome" and, much worse, "airdrome"—and, we believe, to suggest "airfield." We won. But it is a little damping to read the following:

"BIG AIRFIELD CAPTURED"

Morocco radio reports . . . that La Fauconnière airfield . . . has been evacuated by the Germans. La Fauconnière, one of the biggest 'dromes in Tunisia . . ."

* * * * *

"It is obvious only a comparatively few hand-picked men can be got away . . ." "Hand-picked" is going very strong just now, we know; but what exactly is a "hand-picked man"? For that matter, what is a "hand-picked raspberry"? Or rather, what is a raspberry that is *not* hand-picked? Are there machines for picking raspberries? Pardon our ignorance. We simply do not know. We cannot find it in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Later. We have found it in the Supplement. No explanation is given; but from one of the quotations we gather that the source of the expression was "hand-picked coal." The mystery remains. Well, we see what is meant. We have often picked out large (or small) lumps with our hands. But we have never done it with our feet; so we never realized that we were "hand-picking." And we still do not think it is a very good way of picking or selecting men. Indeed, it seems a little insulting.

* * * * *

Talking of insults—we have long deprecated the Navy and Air Force custom of referring to the gallant officers and men of His Majesty's Army as "Pongoes." Who began this? It may be affectionately intended; but it does not sound affectionate. It seems idle for politicians to demand "the closest co-ordination between the various arms" if two of the arms are calling the other arm "pongoes." And our deprecation rises to indignant protest now that we have looked up "pongo" in the dictionary:

"A large anthropoid African ape: (improp.) orang-outang (native)."

"Improp." is right. No more of this, boys.

* * * * *

"The tide of war," in spite of all our efforts, is still going strong. Field-Marshal Smuts gets top marks in this department for his recent remark: "The tide has turned—and turned for good." Which, of course, the tide never does. That is the objection to "the tide of war."

Still, for the speaker, if not the writer, there must be mercy. Did not we ourselves wake up in the middle of a speech, too little prepared, the other day, and hear ourselves saying: "I fear that this Bill is a mountain of machinery with not much meat in it"?
A. P. H.

o o

Alpine Thoughts from London

(With apologies to Robert Browning)

TO be in Vers l'Eglise
Now that winter's there!
And whoever wakes in Vers
l'Eglise
Sees some morning unaware
Eternity has fallen i' the night—
Even the homely haystacks coiled in
white,
And great pagodas made from forest
trees
In Vers l'Eglise!

And after that, when more snow
follows,
Filling with giant smoothness all the
hollows,
Till sheltering chalets scarce can peer
above,
Look how the Switzer's spades have
cleared a way
To the warm stables that the cattle
love;
Note the rich brownness of the
mangered hay,
Lest you should think there'd never
come to birth
Embroidered pasture from the
mountain earth!
And though the cold can pierce the
marrow through
Wait till the sun strikes, crystal from
the blue,
The slithering ski-tracks on the virgin
waste,
There where the air is hippocrene to
taste—
Poured in Olympus when the gods
were new—
Not this stale, smothering, yellow,
witch's brew!
F. M. C.

At the Revivals

"LOVE FOR LOVE" (PHŒNIX)

WHEN Friar Laurence reproves Romeo for apparent fickleness in respect of his former passion Rosaline, the moody Veronesan has the reply:

I pray thee, chide not: she whom I
love now
Doth grace for-grace and love for
love allow;
The other did not so.

Can this be the source of CONGREVE's far-fetched, not particularly characteristic, and—when you come to think of it—rather meaningless title? No scholar ever appears to have said so. But then no scholar has till now been able to set eyes on Mr. GIELGUD's scene of feigned madness as *Valentine* in his own production of *Love for Love*. This has, among many other astonishing suggestions, an astonishing suggestion of Romeo defying the stars in his half-insane pet against circumstance in general. There are other reminiscences in this most witty and engaging performance which is indeed a compound of all the crackbrains, set out with the most delicate sense of burlesque. Here, repeatedly, is Hamlet mad as the wind, but with none of the Dane's slight but admitted bias towards the west; he is mad due north, and hawks and handsaws or heron-shaws are all one to him. Here is even a suggestion of Lear on the heath, and of Macbeth's temporary frenzy at Banquo's return from the dead. Here are all the lunatics of Renaissance tragedy rolled together and dished up for fun.

This is a performance to startle even those who already think Mr. GIELGUD the best of the younger school of actors, and to convert those who do not. *Valentine* is not on paper a good part; acting so varied, so choicely phrased, so consistently elegant in mood, speech, and movement, and so deliciously fantastically in the mad scene, makes it seem a superb one. Let those who deem this mere raving partisanship on our part go to see this whole production and note particularly the crown of *Valentine's* performance, the lovely low-toned sincerity of one of the last of his speeches to his melting *Angelica*: "I have been disappointed of my only hope; and he that loses hope may part with any thing. I never valued fortune, but as it was subservient to my pleasure; and my only pleasure was to please this lady: I have made many vain attempts, and find at last that nothing but my

ruin can effect it; which, for that reason, I will sign—Give me the paper." This reads quite frigidly. Spoken as it is at the Phœnix, it becomes the glowing testament of a heart filled with the purest and most disinterested kind of human devotion.

But we grow laudatory, and hasten to the other parts where faults are more likely to be found. Is this a war-time production of one of the highest comedies in the language, one which demands an all-prevailing period sense? Does it equally demand a rich array of actors and actresses knowing how to communicate that sense and hard to collect from anywhere—even in the conditions of peace? It is, and it does. Have these great difficulties been surmounted? On the whole the most fastidious critic—by which we mean not the foyer gossip but the writer who has studied and loved the play through years and knows its history and its fortunes—must, for once in a way, be tempted to the uncritical answer: "Triumphantly." Some of this cast will be treasured as Lamb treasured his eighteenth-century playbills:—

Sir Sampson

Legend	
Tattle . . .	Mr. TROUNCER
Scandal . . .	Mr. BANKS
Foresight . . .	Mr. QUARTERMAINE
Ben Legend . . .	Mr. MALLESON
Mrs. Frail . . .	Mr. WOODBRIDGE
Miss Prue . . .	Miss ARNAUD
	Miss BADDELEY

The list is as good as it looks. Mr. TROUNCER surpasses expectation as the testy old greatheart. Body o' me, what a performance! Mr. BANKS, whom we fully expected to be utterly miscast as a fop, is the most convincing fop for a generation at least. We now despair of ever finding Mr. QUARTERMAINE giving a piece of acting which is not exquisite; he moves better than any other actor in England, without exception. Mr. MALLESON's astrological cuckold is a wonderful piece of wheezy valetudinarianism, with the eyes of a mouse and the legs of a sparrow, infinitely old, exceedingly funny. Mr. WOODBRIDGE surprises also by giving the sailor an easy charm which we did not think to lie within this actor's compass. (We missed his song, though, at the end of the Third Act. Tradition has it that this sailor must sing, just as the one in *Ruddigore* must dance the hornpipe.) Miss ARNAUD by sheer art reconciles us to the Frenchness of her *Mrs. Frail* by the end of her very first utterance. And Miss ANGELA BADDELEY is the unprovable hobbledohoy of a girl to the life.

Are there still players unmentioned? Yes, there is Miss MARIAN SPENCER as *Mrs. Foresight* and Miss ROSALIE CRUTCHLEY as *Angelica*. These twinkle a shade less brilliantly than the rest of the big constellation because they have less experience in this particularly difficult kind of twinkling. Perhaps Restoration twinkling is even harder than Elizabethan twinkling. But Mr. GIELGUD's overseeing has seen to it that the very underlings in this piece, Mr. MAX ADRIAN's Irish *Jeremy*, particularly, shall take on its general tone, and that Mr. REX WHISTLER should design and Miss JEANETTA COCHRANE dress it all enchantingly. He has also done a little necessary cutting—always with good taste and most certainly without prudishness.

Speaking after careful consideration and after viewing the whole thing from both circle and stalls, we should say that this is immeasurably the richest, the most satisfying, and the most Congrevean production of a CONGREVE play we have ever seen or are ever likely to see. But unless the management will immediately give something like reasonable prominence to the name of Mr. CONGREVE himself outside the theatre, we shall sternly deny ourselves the pleasure of a third visit.

A. D.

At the Ballet

"THE QUEST"

A NEW production by the Sadlers Wells Ballet always arouses keen expectation among ballet-goers. The Wells' producers cast their net ever wider in search of inspiration and variety, and the themes they choose are always adapted with great skill. *Hamlet* was a fantastic *tour de force*, *The Birds* a masterpiece of delicate humour, and now they have given us *The Quest*, an adaptation by DORIS LANGLEY-MOORE of the first book of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. To see his semi-political allegory as a ballet might have surprised Spenser, but *autres temps, autres mœurs*, and it is quite possible that future generations may one day witness a divertissement based on *Mein Kampf*.

The theme of a ballet has to be one of broad contrasts—of love and hate, good and evil—and *The Quest* is the story of the triumph of Truth (*Una*) and Holiness (*St. George*) over Falsehood (*Duesssa*) and Hypocrisy (*Archimago*). *St. George* (ROBERT HELPMANN) and "faire *Una*" (MARGOT FONTEYN) take refuge in a forest from "an hideous storme of raine," and there fall

under the spell of the magician *Archimago* (LESLIE EDWARDS) who separates them by his evil spells and transforms his servant into a travesty of *Una* to destroy the Red Cross Knight's love for her. Near the Palace of Pride he is ensnared by *Duessa* (BERYL GREY), and *Una*, searching vainly for him, is deceived by *Archimago*, disguised as her hero; but *St. George* passes unscathed through many perils and escapes from the Palace of Pride and the Seven Deadly Sins and from the toils of *Duessa*. Having slain the three Saracens *Sansfoy*, *Sansloy* and *Sansjoy*, he is reunited with *Una* and brings her to the House of Holiness.

The plot, which involves many disguises, sounds complicated but is handled with great skill, and the action is perfectly clear. The company give an excellent performance. The music is WILLIAM WALTON's first essay in the realm of ballet, and a successful one; it is clear, colourful and descriptive of the characters and situations. We hope that the Sadlers Wells Ballet may have found in him their Stravinsky, for ballet has existed too long on arrangements and adaptations of music not intended for it. The choreography gives further proof of the great ability of FREDERICK ASHTON, and the effective décor and dresses are by JOHN PIPER, who, like the composer, is a newcomer to the ballet. The difficulties in the way of staging new productions in war-time are enormous, but the company have not as yet found their Benois or Bakst. Their designers in general fail to reach the level of their choreographers.

D. C. B.

Greatness Thrust Upon Us

LET us all, for a little space, rid our hearts of peevishness and ingrained malice so that we may consider the merits of the revised and expurgated edition of the Income Tax Assessment Form. Let us give credit where credit is due and let us remember, each one of us, to complete and sign the declaration on page four.

Considered aesthetically the new form is superb. The only fear is that so many of us will want to frame it in passe-partout that its functional efficiency will be impaired. It is quaint and rather sad to think of the millions of our fellow taxpayers, who because they are new to the game cannot possibly know the serenity of mind which a long contemplation of this

assessment form affords. They are to be pitied. Beauty is not absolute but comparative. This form has given a meaning to our hard pioneering.

The principal charm of the document lies in its rhythmic pattern rather than its detail. It should be viewed as a whole. We may notice that the section "For Official Use" is now more prominent and therefore more comforting in a negative sort of way and that the hackneyed repetition of the "schedule" motif has been eliminated. We may observe too that what was good in earlier works has been preserved. There are the same

opportunities for swift action and immediate relief in the well-designed blanks marked "If none, write 'NONE.'"

A triumph such as this calls for some private celebration. A modern Malvolio, I will appear in yellow stockings and cross-gartered and I will say "O.H.M.S. doth sway my life. I will smile. I will do everything that thou wilt have me."

It matters little that the signature on my copy is rather indistinct. Errors and omissions excepted, I salute you "Wt. 29111. D.2185 11/42 1,623,750 (437 sorts). Gp. 760 F.1258 F. & . . ." whoever you are.



"I said at the beginning that we'd be lucky if we got through this war with nine holes."



"Asking me whether I know a Petty Officer Parker in the Navy is like my asking you whether you know a Flight Sergeant Entwistle in the R.A.F."

"Not Flight Sergeant HARRY Entwistle . . . ?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

"Look Here, upon This Picture, and on This!"

In his introduction to *The Two Marshals* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 10/6) Mr. PHILIP GUEDALLA writes that he had intended for many years to supplement his book on the Second Empire with a study of Bazaine. It is perhaps a pity that he did not fulfil this intention before the temptation of contrasting Marshal Bazaine with Marshal Pétain presented itself. The antithesis between the two men is stated by Mr. GUEDALLA as follows: "One of them surrendered Metz in 1870 and was sentenced to death, while the other surrendered France in 1940, and was sentenced to become its ruler. The first marshal was made a scapegoat by his defeated country; and when the second marshal came to power, the scapegoat was France." Human nature is too complex to be confined within an antithesis. It would, for example, be unsatisfactory to treat Wordsworth and Tennyson as two laureates, one of whom applied his powers too seldom to court themes, the other too often. Having saddled himself with this contrast between the two marshals, Mr. GUEDALLA is inevitably constrained to present Bazaine as favourably and Pétain as unfavourably as possible. The result, though vivid and extremely readable, is not altogether convincing. Bazaine, as portrayed by Mr. GUEDALLA, was a simple man of the

people who sought out danger wherever he could find it, in Africa, Spain and Mexico, owed his rise to supreme command to nothing but his own merits, and was sacrificed by the demagogues of the Third Republic in order to persuade the French that they had not been defeated by the Prussians but betrayed by the Second Empire. Pétain, on the other hand, was a cautious professional soldier, who stayed peacefully at home and never saw action till 1914, when he was already fifty-eight. His best achievement in the war was the skill with which he handled the mutinies in 1917, but his nerve gave way before Ludendorff's advance in the spring of 1918, and he foreshadowed his later collapse when he told Clemenceau that the defeat of the French and English armies was inevitable. Even in his private life he contrasted unfavourably with Bazaine, who married twice and was in his fifties at the time of his second marriage to a bride of seventeen, whereas Pétain, in spite of his recent enthusiasm for the family as the foundation of the state, was sixty-four before he married for the first time.

The final verdict on Pétain may quite probably be as severe as Mr. GUEDALLA's, but it is unlikely that Bazaine's surrender at Metz and Pétain's surrender at Bordeaux will be as sharply contrasted by future historians as they are by Mr. GUEDALLA.

H. K.

Great Adventure

Possibly our planners have observed (one hopes with appropriate uneasiness) that some of the accomplished, young and energetic are planning to escape totalitarianism by reverting to subsistence farming. America—Up the Pilgrim Fathers!—is in the van; and ERICK BERRY and her husband HERBERT BEST, poisoned by pasteurized milk and processed food, sick of "politicians and plumbing," took on a derelict holding in the Adirondacks. *Concertina Farm* (JOSEPH, 10/6) has, for a start, to close down every winter. Its owners keep stock, however—and board it out; they grow and preserve quantities of food; and their staple interest promises to be tree crops. There is something French about this dual economy—a trade eked out by the land. And the tree crops are French too. One remembers not only cider apples in Normandy, but ash-boughs stored for fodder in Auvergne. We might do the same here, if we can keep the land from *Latifundia Ltd.* Such ventures are generous in labour and modest in outlay. There are tools, but no machinery. Outside pleasures vanish. The life itself is a pleasure—as this plucky, exhilarating and competent book abundantly proves.

H. P. E.

Pity Unlimited

FABER AND FABER's new collection of *Russian Short Stories* (8/6) begins, like every other collection since the droshkies came galloping in view with CONSTANCE GARNETT's translation, with Pushkin's "Queen of Spades" and Gogol's "Overcoat." And, indeed, having read or re-read these two masterpieces you are initiated into the dominant theme of Russian literature—pity, limitless pity, extending from the horse standing in the shafts with a broken leg to the soldier on the battle-field and the half-frozen clerk at his desk. No matter how Gogol or Chekov may tear their hair over the vast, blundering, painfully inefficient social system, still its victims need pity. No matter how extravagantly Tolstoy admires the passive wisdom of his peasants who "lie down like a stone and rise like new bread," still in their suffering they ask for pity. To appreciate that lovely quality, Russian stories should be taken not by the anthologyful but one at a time; in this collection there are twenty, dating from Pushkin up to the Revolutionary

period, with one of Sologub's charming and slightly maudlin fantasies, "The Hoop," as a kind of light relief, in the middle. It is disappointing not to find any examples from Soviet Russia, and perhaps too the good old-fashioned method of choosing stories "characteristic of their authors" is the best one; the editor doesn't follow it, and so Andreyev is represented by "On the Day of the Crucifixion" instead of one of his nightmares, and Tolstoy by "Ilyan Ilych" instead of one of his peasant studies. However, it is in "Ilyan Ilych" that you find a sentence which is the keynote to the volume: "His life had been most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible."

P. M. F.

Moments Musicaux

One pities the man who finds "no compensations to weigh against advancing years." After all, Cicero's mellowing apple should gratefully replace its crude, green, little predecessor, however entrancing the spring and minatory the autumn. Yet Sir ARNOLD BAX, closing *Farewell, My Youth* (LONGMANS, 7/6), in 1914, is right about the promise of "life . . . before it was delivered over to totalitarian devilry." An auspicious age for letters; a tolerable age for music; and for a young man who doubled the parts of English composer and Irish story-teller, a very good age indeed. Outsiders, he should perhaps note, find composers harder to hit it off with than story-tellers; and Sir ARNOLD has blown up the finest bridge between the composer and the common man in decrying folk-song. An echo of Debussy, he naturally disliked his English forerunners—not only Cecil Sharp. But the golden age of Dublin found him writing Irish stories as "Dermot O'Byrne" and entering with rare sensibility and gusto into the artistic and spiritual values of the Celt. There are late Pre-Raphaelites in England; and scapegrace adventures in Russia and Germany; but Ireland and Yeats count for most. "His poetry has always meant more to me than all the music of the centuries."

H. P. E.

Sedgebury Wallop

Although Mr. A. G. STREET does not forget that our towns may need defence from invasion no less urgently than our cliffs and fields, and has gone to trouble to study the methods and manners of urban units, he inevitably makes his account of the Home Guard a tale of the countryside. His place is so naturally in the out-of-doors, and the bit of a man that never grows up is so strong in him, that a crawl in the mud from one patch of cover to the next or a night-long vigil under the stars appeals to him as rather a release from school than a solemn sacrifice to patriotism. His imaginary village with a ridiculous name is typical Southern England, and *Farmer Pocock, Shep Yates, Carter Goodridge* and the rest are fellow-bandits on the prowl, with himself as *Robin Hood*. Indeed, though in *From Dusk Till Dawn* (HARRAP, 5/-) there is compressed a real history of the inception and development, the trials and the triumphs of the Home Guard, the grimness of the underlying purpose does not dominate this record. Rather it is as a spontaneous, almost joyful, uprising of men of all ages and conditions given opportunity to find relief from a pressing burden of anxiety and thereupon shaping themselves almost by a process of natural growth into a body of defence, that he would have us regard the birth of the force. That its existence has been and continues a potent factor in saving the world from Nazism is not in doubt. This light-hearted presentation fits well, in the author's skilful hands, a topic whose implications lie desperately deep.

C. C. P.

Interview With Old Friend

Being lucky enough to run into Mr. Fortune, I asked him in confidence what he thought of his latest adventure, offered by GOLLANCZ at 8/6 under the title of *Mr. Fortune Finds a Pig*.

"Oh, my dear chap," he groaned. "Been clue-huntin' so long I'm shock-proof, bullet-proof and corpse-proof, so what? To philosophic observer all mystery stuff the same. Starts with chaos plus, the mind is blank, then lucky break here, invigoratin' bottle there, fog fades slowly into mist. When it don't seem possible comes the dawn, or somebody else's tiger burnin' bright. One minute everythin' nasty, brutish and so on, next everythin' gay as Aunt Fanny's hat while master-sleuth assures all three survivors thing is jam to chap like him. However. Time hitch-hikes on. Misery and old boots."

"Could you give my great bloodthirsty public an idea of what this is all about?" I asked him.

"Oh, my dear fellow," he moaned, tying his long legs into a loose grannie. "I wonder. The subconscious is opaque. Background of Adolf stirrin' up trouble on home front, givin' typhus to evacuee children and food-poisonin' to R.A.F., makin' bad blood between Services by stagin' joint knock-out of Admiral and Air Marshal by Duke of York's steps. Intelligent work by Fifth Column usin' public busybodies, pornographic weeklies, Welsh voodoo and a goat. Rudery, torture and sudden death. Largish field."

"Is that where the pig lives?"

"Oh, my Uncle Joe. Typhus-bug likes suckin'-pig, same like I do."

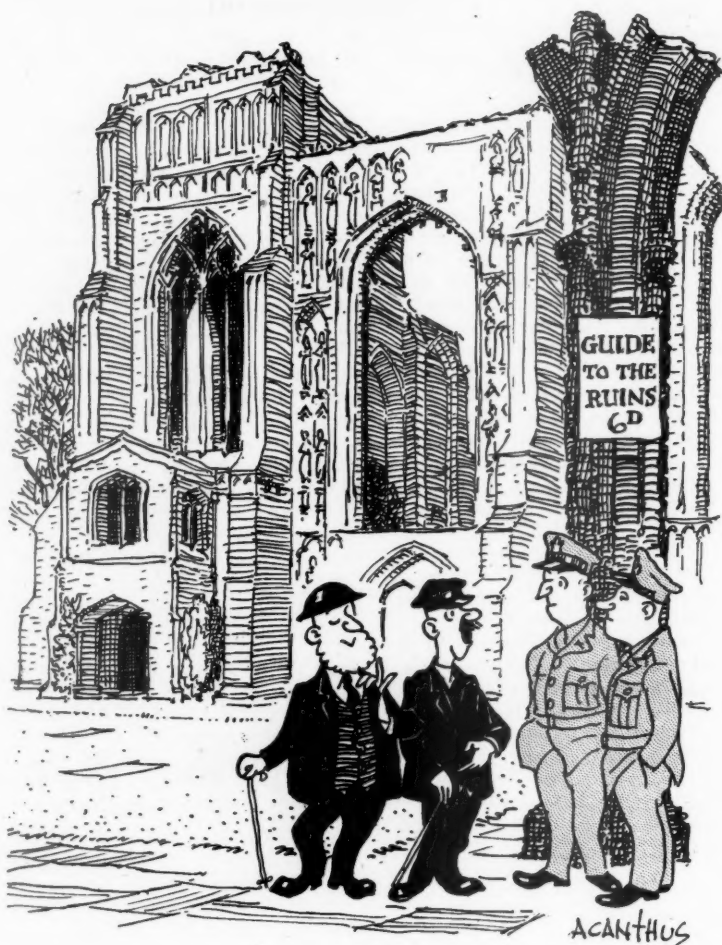
"It all sounds up to standard," I said. "And how do you find Mr. H. C. BAILEY as an author?"

Mr. Fortune unwound his long legs from the running bowline in which they had been writhing. "Dug me up some drinkable claret in Wales," he said, and sighed heavily.

E. O. D. K.



"... so I pushed her up to thirty feet."



"Thanks to Mr. Higgins, it came through the blitz undamaged."

Eikons For Victory

IN H.M.S. *Epergne II* our spirit room is partitioned off the yacht's old luggage-hold, under the Petty Officers' Mess—previously the billiard-room. Standing in the passage I could watch the cox'n and the captain of the hold measure out the issue, and at the same time listen to the people in the P.O.'s Mess, where they were busy having Stand Easy.

P.O. Trafford was reading bits out of a very old daily while the tea was drawing—the Ladies' Page, done in a voice that plainly owed something to Mr. Arthur Askey.

"Listen to this, Buffs. 'And by the way, Madame Pantacopoulis, wife of

the Greek consul in Shipton-under-Lyne, tells me that the R.A.F. are to have an eikon presented to them by the Greek government.'"

"Have a what-what-what presented to them?" The Chief Boatswain's Mate did not sound deeply interested; but one of the stoker P.O.s grumbled "Reckon they ought to make it a whole squadron. What's the use of one by itself?"

"Squadron of whats?"

"Eikons."

"What for?"

"Eikons? What for?"

"Yes, what for?"

"What for? Why to shoot down

—jerries with," the stoker P.O. indignantly explained.

"What with, eikons?"

"Yes, with Highcons and Airocobras and Tommyhawks and Spitfires and everything we can get," the stoker P.O. shouted.

Battle was joined. An eikon was a fighter-plane. Yes, but there was bitter argument about the engines it was equipped with.

"Rolls-Royce Merlins," maintained the Stoker P.O.

"What's got Rolls-Royce Merlins?"

I recognized the brisk voice of the Leading Telegraphist (passed for P.O.).

"Pour us out a cupper tea, Buffs," he asked the Chief Boatswain's Mate, and demanded again: "What's got Rolls-Royce Merlins?"

"Eikon fighters, if you want to know," growled the stoker P.O., intimating by his tone that he did not approve of people "picking up fag-ends."

"Eikons," laughed the Leading Tel. "Lord, man! An eikon's not a fighter."

The delightful fantasy of eikons zooming and twisting among the startled Heinkels and Messerschmitts faded. I sympathized with the stoker P.O. when he growled: "Course you had to know best."

"Well, what is it then, laddie?" inquired the Chief Boatswain's Mate.

"Coastal Reconnaissance flying-boat," said the Leading Tel. "Saw that in one of those quizzes."

"He says it's a Yank," persisted the Higher Submarine Detector, a Scot more intent on truth than tact.

"Probably manufactured under licence over here," suggested the Leading Tel.

"Here's Mike," said Trafford impishly, as the other stoker P.O. came in. "He'll know. Tell us, Michael, me lad, what's an eikon when it's at home?"

"What about changing the subject?" suggested the Chief Boatswain's Mate.

"What's that ye're saying now?" parried the other stoker P.O. in his amiable Dublin brogue. "An eikon now? Is the tea cooked yet, Buffs? An eikon? 'Tis a holy picture."

Peals of laughter greeted this piece of Irish naïveté. The Leading Tel's partisans shouted derision.

Callaghan, the Irish one, shouted above it all "I'm telling youse 'tis a holy picture they have in those parts. But wait now while I tell ye. Didn't me and Rory Mulligan, that was middle-weight champion of the Med. Fleet, didn't we purchase one from a widow woman when we went ashore at Smyrna that time? In the *Chatham*, it was."

I quickly climbed up through the hatch, and there was P.O. Callaghan hunting in his suit-case. He produced the eikon for me and all to see.

"Look now, sir," he said in his gentle brogue, "if that isn't Saint Patrick and Saint George and the Blessed Mother of God herself?" which, indeed, they were. It was a beautiful old eikon.

"But what I want to know is," persisted the Leading Tel., fighting a stubborn rearguard action on the rationalist front, "what was the point of presenting one of them to the R.A.F.?"

"There speaks an ignorant heretic for ye," said Callaghan, much pleased, and rubbing up his eikon with a morsel of cotton-waste.

"Will you take a cup of tea, or would you prefer coffee, sir?" asked the Chief Boatswain's Mate, winking. "It's just about 'Out Pipes.'"

More Collected Essays of J. Pope Clugston

DISCRIMINATION

IT is most unfair, and just another example of masculine tyranny, that reference books for men are better bound than reference books for women. In any normal household the cookery books and garden guides rapidly fall apart; the covers come off, the index gets torn and finally disappears leaf by leaf, and the whole volume begins to loosen up. The dictionaries, almanacs, etc., though consulted just as often, remain more solid and can be used for years. This proves of course that men are more brutal and careless and need stronger bindings on their books—otherwise the binders would not take such fantastic pains. Still, it would be only fair to provide women with bindings that can stand at least a gentle pounding, pushing, buckling, ripping, snatching, twisting, yanking movement, as well as a reasonable number of tumbles.

DICTIONARIES

And speaking of reference books, my dictionary is beginning to irritate me considerably. While looking up something else I happened to glance at the definition of *fifteen*, and I found that *fifteen* means one more than *fourteen*. I suddenly had one of those nasty little suspicions which have so often served me well, and I looked up *fourteen*; sure enough, it was defined as

one more than *thirteen*, and *thirteen* turned out to be one more than *twelve*, and so on. "We are simply getting nowhere," I said to myself, and skipped back to *one*, where I knew I could pin them down. *One* can't very well be defined as one more than nothing, because they have to say what *one* is. But they fooled me again; *one*, it seems, is one less than *two*. They did make a feeble attempt at a half-hearted little definition. They mumbled something about unity. But what is a unit? You don't define things just by translating them into another language.

ME AND I

If you ask my Aunt Aloysia "Who is there?" she will reply "It is I," or possibly just "I," because she feels that to say "It's me" is not only vulgar and incorrect but has something to do with wickedness, depravity, infamy, iniquity, and eternal punishment. It honestly frightens her. Yet how many of these moralists are inconsistent! It was only yesterday that I heard her say "Woe is me!" I should very much liked to have asked her "Woe is *who*?" but I am just as frightened of Aunt Aloysia as she is of *me* (I mean the word *me*, and not the present writer). Dear me, yes. Or dear I.

STEWARDS

The stewards in a big ship have other stewards to wait on them at table,

make their beds, and perform the little duties that the first stewards perform for the passengers. After the war I shall have to go on a cruise, because there are two things I want to find out about these stewards' stewards and nobody seems able to tell me. Do these stewards' stewards have still other stewards to attend them? It seems most unlikely. Still, it does seem hard on them, somehow. And is the hardness of their lot ameliorated by tips from the stewards? Do the stewards tremble to think they have not tipped the stewards' stewards highly enough? I must go down to the seas again and find out.

BEARDS

There is another thing I want to know about life at sea. Everyone knows that in the Royal Navy you can grow a beard but that permission to grow must first be obtained. Well, that is perfectly reasonable, but on what grounds is permission given or refused? Is it ever refused? Does the Executive Officer forbid a yeoman of signals to grow a scarlet beard lest it be taken for a bit of bunting and confuse the messages he sends? Is a man with a jutting jaw, something like the ram on the bow of an obsolete cruiser, forbidden a beard, to keep him from sticking out still farther in advance of himself, or is he encouraged because a buffer or fender in the right place may save countless lives? If the entire ship's



"Do you still stock black-out material, or is the craze over?"

company of a large battle-cruiser grew beards, would the extra two tons of hair endanger the safety of the vessel? And why on earth do we hear no question about this in Parliament?

GALLUP POLLS

The astonishing thing about Gallup polls and other tests of public opinion is that nobody ever comes to ask me what *I* think about anything. According to the newspapers my opinion is represented in the final results, since the questionnaire has been answered by a complete cross-section of society. But I feel that my opinion can only be represented by my own voice, and I don't see how my neighbours can answer for me. Neither do they; they are the first to admit it. In a Gallup

poll everyone should Gallup. "I Gallapped, Dirck Gallapped, we Gallapped all three." There is no use asking Dirck a few questions and then pretending Joris and I agreed with him. In the final results, of course, there is always a small column for odds and ends; they call it "Uncertain" or some such thing. If the Gallup boys wanted to find out what the British Public thought of polygamy, they would ask their questions and then print the results as follows:

In favour of polygamy	23%
Against polygamy	67%
Uncertain	10%

The "Uncertain" item leaves room for their own little errors as well as ours. But there is absolutely no use in

telling me that my vote belongs in that third group. Sometimes I am in favour of polygamy and sometimes I am all against it and occasionally I am uncertain. It all depends, doesn't it? And there is no use in telling me my single vote wouldn't make any difference, because I am sure that nearly everyone feels as I do. A universal vote, with fair questions and honest answers, might have some result like this:

In favour of polygamy	95%
Against polygamy	92%
Uncertain	94%
Rude and uncommunicative	5%
Not at home	2%
No spik English	1%
E. and O.E.	



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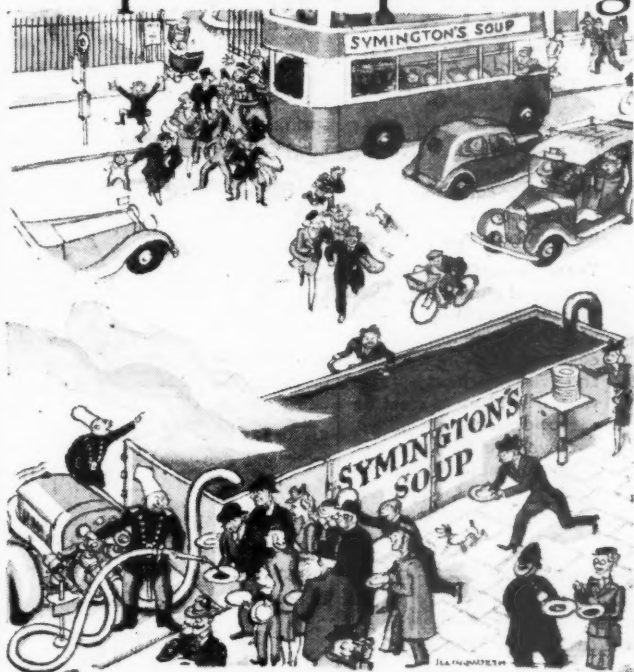
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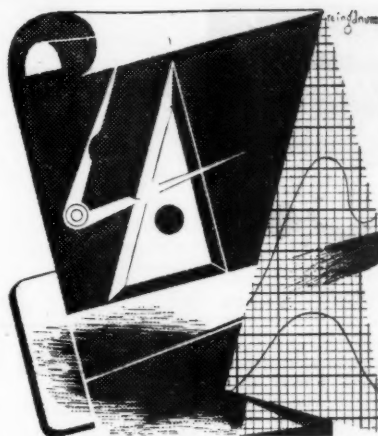
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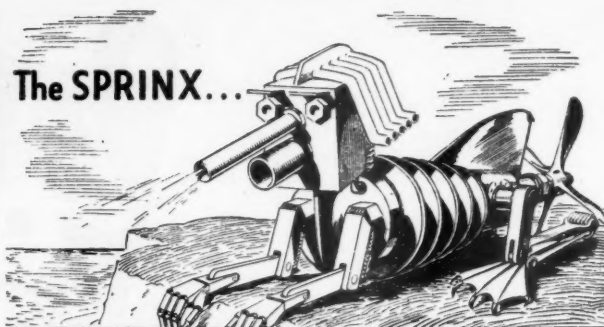
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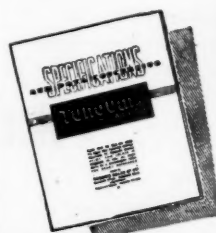
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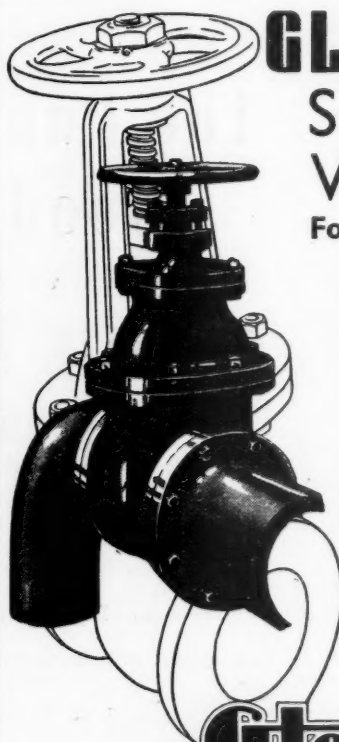


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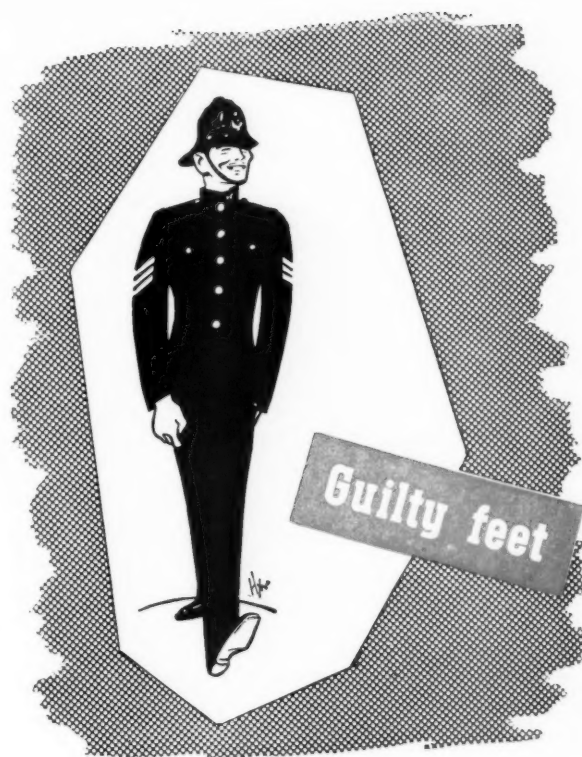
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